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ABSTRACT

The subject of restructuring teacher education and working toward the improvement of educational opportunities in the schools is addressed. Teacher education faculties often are in power struggles with other faculties in colleges and universities and are often underrated as professionals. Decision-making in regard to teacher education is becoming more political. There should be more reasonable expectations about what teacher education programs can do and the assumptions upon which they are based should be clarified. The term "teacher educator" includes both campus-based and school-based personnel. While competencies are basic in teacher education, a broader philosophy is needed. Three areas of improving the preparation of educational personnel are dealt with. In respect to governance of the schools, solutions to problems and design of programs will be more effective when decisions are made collaboratively and rationally. In the design and implementation of teacher education programs it is important to keep in mind fundamental issues such as what is the purpose of schools, what kinds of personnel are needed, and what competencies do those professionals need to possess. It should be assumed that professional development is career long and major tasks in this area can be accomplished by good inservice programs. The quality control of all educators is of critical importance. Teacher educators must refine and improve procedures for insuring that only the ablest enter the profession. Greater attention must be paid to recruitment, admission and program retention, entry and retention in the profession. (JD)

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THIS WE MUST DO

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Speech presented at the June 1976 Ohio Teacher Education and Certification Advisory Commission Meeting

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From a national perspective, what appears to be happening in teacher education at the state level in Ohio is very encouraging. Based on a familiarity with recent efforts in the area of teacher education by its State Department of Education, by some key individuals in its state legislature, by some of its university teacher educators, Ohio may be regarded as one of the few states which has begun to get its "ducks in a row" in the needed restructuring of teacher education. Much remains to be done.

In the brief analysis and identification of imperatives for teacher education which follow, our purpose will be two-fold. First, we will attempt to paint with rather broad brush strokes what may be called conditions of the current educational scene in the United States, with particular attention to professional education personnel development. Secondly, we will use this set of conditions as a context clue for spelling out a set of imperatives, the "musts" for restructuring teacher education.

Before beginning, however, a clarification is needed. In the discussion which follows, education personnel development refers to the professional preparation of all personnel, however employed and at whatever level of schooling. One of the limitations of the term, teacher education, is that it usually connotes only the pre-service training of elementary or secondary school classroom teachers. The term, education personnel development, us used, therefore, to convey the wider meaning associated with it, and even the term, teacher education, is generally used below in its broader sense.

The Current Educational Scene

A first set of conditions of the current educational scene are those which relate to issues of governance. In my opinion, education clearly is becoming more openly political. Such questions as "Who decides?" that is, "Who makes educational decisions?" are currently topics of wide and sometimes heated debate; and no clear consensus has yet emerged. An even tougher question, "Who decides who decides?" illustrates the significance of issues which face educators in the political arena. One of the problems associated with this, as I see it, is that the political process itself becomes a focal point which very often gets in the way of efforts to improve education through it. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that new political powers have been legitimately and effectively used to initiate some educational improvement.

A number of significant power struggles are under way amongst various constituent groups in professional education, including teacher education. These groups involved include institutions of higher education, teacher organizations, school districts, state and federal education agencies. In addition to power struggles between and among these groups over such issues as the control of teacher education, there are struggles even within some of these groups which can impact programs of education personnel development. One illustration within higher education institutions is the perennial struggle between teacher education faculties and faculties in the arts and sciences disciplines. Examples with teacher organizations include the struggle at the national level between the NEA and the AFT, as well as struggles between local or state affiliates and their national organizations.

There seems to be under way a large-scale search, conscious or not, for ways for constituent groups to work together cooperatively or collaboratively in their common best interests. There is also a fear on the part of some of these constituents that one or another of them has some "take-over plan", and there is a

climate of great anxiety, if not outright fear, which pervades inter-constituent activities. In higher education institutions, there is much concern for professional survival among teacher educators. In the public schools, there is much concern which arises from the present "supply-demand" situation. Nevertheless, there is, at the core of all of this activity, a genuine attempt, in my opinion, to find ways for these constituent groups to work together, and specifically in teacher education.

Next, much of the political activity now under way is targeted at broadening the base of decision-making in education. That target in itself is a laudable one. However, what is also happening, in many cases is simply a decreasing of the influence in teacher education so long held by higher education and an increasing of influence in other quarters. And what is happening at the same time is that a great deal of this internal politicking is resulting in a decrease, rather than an increase, in the collective impact of the professional community on public decision-makers. It may be useful to view many of the short-range impacts of the shifting of power among constituents as "corrective measures" applied to compensate, by initially overcompensating for power distortions of the past. However, though there is some sensitivity that we need to build into this process measures to preclude equally distorted, if different, power distributions in the future, that this is so is not yet widely recognized or generally accepted.

We are beginning to see the emergence of some modest efforts to work collaboratively in teacher education, particularly among institutions of higher education, public school districts and teacher organizations in the design and implementation of pre-service and in-service programs. Such efforts, by and large, are taking the form of campus-based, field-oriented programs, teacher corps project programs, and teacher centers. At the national level, NCATE's recent restructuring represents an attempt at inter-constituent collaboration in the "quality control" of teacher education. At the state level, groups such

as the Ohio Advisory Commission on Teacher Education and Certification, as well as similar bodies in Minnesota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Kentucky and other states are examples of the same phenomenon. There appears to be an increasing readiness for greater collaboration in teacher education on all fronts, though the constituent context varies from place to place.

Finally, in relation to governance, it is clear that local professional negotiations between teacher associations and school boards is an important given which necessarily impacts teacher education as school districts search for ways to collaborate with higher education institutions in this context.

Secondly, there are some other conditions of the current educational scene of which many teacher educators are becoming increasingly aware. An important condition in this regard is an awakening to the realization that the term, teacher educator, includes both campus-based and school-based personnel; and that a part of our present confusion in teacher education may arise from a kind of "identity crisis" many of us are struggling to resolve.

At an equally basic level, there continues to be general dissatisfaction with the results of teacher education. In part, that dissatisfaction is legitimate; in part, it is not. The latter is rather a result of needing a "scapegoat" for other conditions. To explain, it would not be inaccurate, I believe, to observe that the public reacts in "knee-jerk" and simplistic fashion to most crises which confront it and that schools become a primary focus of much of that reaction. The public looks increasingly to its schools for solutions for larger social problems, most recently, racial segregation. In ricochet fashion, the public blames first schools, then teachers, then teacher educators for problems in schools and out, on the simplistic assumption that, if somehow teachers were better prepared, most other problems would quietly disappear.

Too, educational personnel across-the-board are beginning to demand pre-service and in-service training programs that are far more relevant than most in

the past have been to the demands of the professional roles they are expected to fill; and comment here about competency-based teacher education (CBTE) is appropriate. First, I strongly support the position illustrated by a Texas Attorney General's recent ruling that a state's mandating CBTE as the only approach is illegal and further, in my opinion, totally inappropriate. In fact, whether CBTE survives or not isn't even important. But secondly, whether that label fades from the educational scene or not, I believe the basic ingredients are here to stay. Those ingredients are simply too powerful to be stored away on the shelves of educational history. Any approach to teacher education which insists that developers and users continually confront basic educational questions, which requires them to conceptualize the nature of professional roles and their requisite competencies, which demands that they clearly explicate objectives and provide instruction which is specifically tailored to assist those in training to achieve those objectives, which places heavy emphasis on the validation and demonstrations of competencies, and which uses assessment procedures which provide evidence that programs designed to develop such competencies actually do so, any approach, that is, which makes such appropriate demands on teacher educators will continue to have an important and positive impact.

Society, as a whole, continues to press for "accountability" in teacher education. What is meant here is not simply the empty rhetoric which so often follows the raising of this "red flag", but rather the legitimate questions being addressed to <u>all</u> professions: "Won't you be a little more explicit about what it is you're trying to do?" and "Won't you provide some evidence that you're actually accomplishing what you say you're trying to do?"

In society at large, there also continues to be a press for equalization of educational opportunities, particularly between and among the sexes and various racial and socio-economic groups. And, there is, as well, a growing realization among the public that there are significant inputs other than the influences of

formal schooling which impact the learning of our children and youth.

One implication of these general conditions is some realization within professional education that we need to have more reasonable expectations about what teacher education programs can do. For years in education, especially in teacher education, we've claimed too much!

There is a growing realization of the inadequacies of the typical four-year baccalaureate degree teacher preparation program, a program which allocates only about 16-20% of its time to the professional preparation of secondary, and about 25-30% for elementary school teachers. And many of us are realizing more and more the inadequacies of the knowledge-base and "professional culture" of teacher education. Most of us recognize that the typical teacher education program operates, by and large, on a set of untested assumptions. Most of those assumptions, for most of the time, are kept "under the table"; we refuse to deal with them. Instead, a lot of vaguely-defined contingencies are represented as a path which somehow ultimately leads to both a college degree and a professional certificate. What more and more of us are demanding is the validation of these assumptions and contingencies and the research and on-going program evaluation that validation necessitates.

A final condition of the present situation in teacher education is a wider recognition of the "low totem pole" status assigned to teacher education by institutions of higher education, by state and national education agencies, by elected public officials, by teacher organizations, and by school districts and the general public. The formal and informal budgeting of resources, time, effort, people and fiscal support, within all of these groups is ample evidence of the status generally assigned teacher education.

Others may be added to our list of the present conditions of teacher education though, in my opinion, these are the most important ones. In any case, we can view these conditions in either of two ways. We can view them as a set of negative and

hopeless conditions, sit back with arms folded in despair, and conclude that nothing can be done. Or, we can view these as conditions of a reality we must deal with, but which itself gives us clues to next steps and provides general direction for the future for improving the preparation of education personnel.

Imperatives

In my opinion, it is more useful to view these conditions in the latter sense, and they constitute the basis here for identifying some imperatives for our future agenda in teacher education. These imperatives, these things we must do, may be grouped under three headings: (1) governance, (2) design and implementation of programs, and (3) "quality control" in teacher education.

With respect to governance, it is useful to recognize that no one constituent group in education has a monopoly on truth and wisdom, that each one possesses unique expertise, and that solutions to problems, the design of programs, and so on, will be more productive and more effective when positions and decisions are reached collaboratively and when they are made on rational bases.

The profession as a whole, then, must eliminate its own internal fragmentation, the divisiveness resulting in contradictory positions on educational issues and policies which have undermined its collective impact on decision-makers. If educators expect to become a true profession, then we must behave like one in this respect. A necessary first step is that we collectively deal with the question of whom the profession includes. Will "practitioner" include only members of one constituent organization or will it include a broader group of identifiable professionals?

As a whole, the profession must create and utilize more effective mechanisms for influencing decision-makers in the interest of improved education personnel development. We must find ways to harness the potential of our collective power to influence local, state and federal educational decision-makers.

Teacher educators, both campus-based and school-based, must create, experiment

with and implement more effective ways of working toward common goals in the improvement of education personnel development programs. An illustration here is the Arizona Internship Program which, interestingly enough, has many features in common with the so-called "entry year certificate" program being developed in Ohio. Experimentation is under way in Arizona with a two-year internship program for beginning in-service teachers under the auspices of one of four state "centers", each operated by one or more of the state's universities. Teacher interns are issued two-year certificates, employed in schools at full beginning salaries. During the internship, the employing school district works with one of the centers to design a program which augments the intern's previous professional preparation and concurrent teaching experience. During the two-year program, the intern is evaluated for continuing certification at its conclusion. Such programs can arbitrarily be viewed either as the beginning of in-service or as the end of pre-service, such labels being related to the different mechanisms for funding them.

With respect to the design and implementation of teacher education programs, the following imperatives are appropriate. Teacher educators must revive continuing attention to fundamental educational issues: "What is or should be the purposes of the schools?" as well as "What kinds of professional personnel do we therefore need?" and, "What competencies do those professionals need to possess?" This same point can be made by pointing out that questions like the latter ones must necessarily be addressed in the context of our responses to questions like the first one.

We must design and implement preparation programs which support the assumption that professional development is career long. Two implications follow. First, we need to make more modest claims about "pre-service" programs. Secondly, we must recognize that, given current conditions, our major tasks are in the arena of "in-service" programs which need to be oriented to specific contexts.

Next, we must produce more evidence that we are actually doing what we claim to be doing, and that what we do actually makes a difference. This imperative means identifying professional role competencies, defining "effective teaching" and raising the other hard questions we either ignore or address so pedantically.

Teacher educators must recognize that pre-service programs are most effective when they are campus-based and school-oriented. But, as many have pointed out, such programs need more than just "hours" of random experience in schools and classrooms. Such experiences need conceptualization and purpose, and they need to be evaluated in program contexts. And, in keeping with our pronouncements for decades, must be humane, individualized and personalized.

Thirdly, there are some imperatives for "quality control" we need attend. Teacher educators must recognize the critical importance of and support the quality control of all education personnel development. This means utilizing available mechanisms such as private accrediting agencies and state education agencies as well as devising new ones.

Recognizing that the competence of graduates of preparation programs is the most convincing evidence of program quality, teacher educators must develop more effective means of assessing the competencies of their graduates at the point of program exit.

Next, individual professionals--in all roles--must assume primary responsibility for his or her own professional development. At the same time, local school districts and states must assume greater responsibility for providing and supporting opportunities for continuing professional development. In this regard, as in others, teacher educators must exemplify what they teach.

Teacher educators must refine and improve procedures for insuring that only the ablest teach or play other professional roles. That means we must pay greater attention to recruitment, admission and program retention, entry and retention in the profession.

Next, if we are to design preparation programs on sounder bases than we now have, then there must be a concerted and vigorous effort among all educators to expand our knowledge base. This means investing a significantly greater proportion of available and potential resources in research and development efforts.

Of course, the latter imperative, like others, means that teacher education generally must receive more adequate support. At least two implications follow here. First, institutions of higher education must re-examine their policies with respect to the internal allocation of institutional resources to teacher education in relation to the income generated by teacher education students. Teacher education must receive "its fair share" of institutional resources. Secondly, state education agencies must vigorously represent the needs and interests of teacher education within their respective states. State education agencies must serve not only as a catalyst for raising minimum expectations but also as an advocate for those attempting to meet and surpass those expectations.

As we work toward a restructuring of teacher education and the improvement of the schooling of children and youth, we must attend to necessary support bases among the public--parents and other taxpayers, PTAs and school boards. In this regard, there are many specifics about which we must educate the public:

1. Schools are legitimate places for teacher education;
2. Some school personnel may legitimately serve as teacher educators;
3. When serving in this and other non-teaching professional roles, school personnel are nevertheless performing legitimate professional services;
4. Provisions and concommitant reward systems for all professional education services need to be made;
5. Education personnel development is "career long" and is a legitimate public expense;
6. Assessment and evaluation need not depend solely on standardized commercial tests;

7. Accountability is a much broader concept than classroom teacher performance, being a function of the interrelatedness and interdependence of many things.

Finally, current efforts by state teacher education boards and commissions, like that in Ohio, to restructure teacher education must exert caution so that their new policies and procedures do not create uniformity and standardization, a condition which has led to the establishment of these bodies in the first instance.

If we are to respond to the set of conditions that were first described, if we are to move toward becoming a profession, and if we are to restructure teacher education and work toward the improvement of educational opportunities in our schools, then I say, "This we must do!"